

Bob von Sternberg, Hot Dish Blog (*Star Tribune*)

The anniversary party continues.

A year after the sweeping overhaul of the nation's health care system became law, Democrats' chorus of praise for it continues.

Three members of Minnesota's congressional delegation and people who say they've been helped by the law held a press conference Friday to laud the changes it has brought -- and reaffirm their determination to block Republicans' threats to gut, or even overturn, it.

"We're gonna fight it," Rep. Betty McCollum said of House Speaker John Boehner's pledge to scrap the law, the Affordable Health Care Act.

Saying the law can certainly be tweaked to improve it, Rep. Keith Ellison said that critics planning "to take us back to the bad old days, we say, never, never, never."

State Health Commissioner Ed Ehlinger likened the law to "a starter home," that while not perfect, "gives us a solid foundation" to continue to provide medical access to more Americans.

Sen. Al Franken said the law instills "peace of mind of knowing [patients] don't have to go bankrupt. We know every American deserves health care ... This is going to help all Americans by bringing down the unsustainable cost of health care."

Several Minnesotans, representing the state's Patient Advocacy Coalition, told stories about how much their lives have changed since the passage of the law. Before, cancer survivor Robianne Schultz said people in her situation were forced to choose "between saving their lives and their life savings."

